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42 [20].

(Amended)

A catheter as recited in Claim ~~39~~¹⁵ [17], wherein said access

means comprises:

- a. a connector attached to said proximal end of said outer tube and said proximal end of said inner tube;
- b. a first access tube attached to said connector and communicating therethrough with said first lumen;
- c. a second access tube attached to said connector and communicating therethrough with said second lumen; and
- d. a third access tube attached to said connector and communicating therethrough with said third lumen.

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REMARKS

1. Background

Claims denominated by Applicant as new Claims 2-21 were pending.

In Paragraph No. 1 of the Office Action, those claims were renumbered as Claims 24-43, which were determined to be directed to the following plurality of patentably distinct inventions:

Group I: Claims 24-42, directed to a triple lumen catheter; and

Group II: Claim 43, directed to a method of manufacturing a triple lumen catheter.

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2. Amendments to the Claims

In compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.126, the new claims submitted in the Preliminary Amendment dated August 25, 1998, and denominated therein as Claims 2-21, have been renumbered as Claims 24-43.

From thereamong, Claim 43 has been canceled without prejudice to the right to pursue the subject matter thereof in this or any application filed subsequently.

To reduce the likelihood of future confusion relative to the identity of specific claims under consideration hereafter in this prosecution, the full text of remaining pending Claims 24-42 is set forth above, thusly renumbered with additional amendments and appropriate alterations in dependencies shown in standard bracket-and-underline format.

The amendments to the text of Claims 24, 31, and 41 were previously presented in the Supplementary Preliminary Amendment dated February 9, 1999. As stated therein, those amendments recite the inventive combination with enhanced clarity in a manner supported by the specification as originally filed.

Accordingly, no new matter is introduced thereby, and entry thereof is respectfully requested.

3. Response to Restriction Requirement

In response to the restriction requirement contained in the Office Action, Applicant hereby elects without traverse for prosecution purposes the claims of Group I, namely Claims 24-42 as amended and presented herein, which are directed to a triple lumen catheter.

The balance of the pending claims have been canceled without prejudice to the right to seek protection for the subject matter recited therein in this or any application filed subsequently.

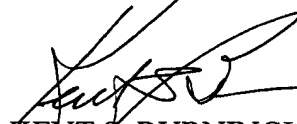
4. Conclusion

Claims 24-42 as amended herein are now presented for consideration on the merits.

In the event that the Examiner finds any remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application which could be clarified by a telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to initiate the same with the undersigned.

DATED this 20th day of October, 1999.

Respectfully submitted,



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